



Department of Energy
Germantown, MD 20874-1290

MAR 09 1999

Mr. Wayne R. Hansen
Chief Scientist
Environment, Safety and Health
Los Alamos National Laboratory
P.O. Box 1663, Mail Stop K491
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545

Dear Mr. Hansen:

We are pleased to learn that your thermal ionization mass spectrometry ultra-sensitive analysis technique for plutonium analysis is progressing along so well after your participation in the National Institutes of Standards and Technology traceable intercomparison that was done in mid-1997. Your current nominal detection limit of ~60 aCi with a ~45 aCi measurement performance is indeed impressive and does indeed represent significant technical progress in ensuring the health and safety of radiation workers.

It is reassuring to learn that you are working toward full compliance with title 10 Code of Federal Regulations 835 which relies on compliance with the performance criteria in American National Standards Institute (ANSI) N13.30 with Departmental standardization on the minimum detectable activity in attocuries.

We appreciate your offer of potential collaboration with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) to ensure success in the evaluation of the Marshall Islands relocation project. At this time, we are committed to a process with the LLNL and the number of samples at this point is minimal. As you are most likely aware, LLNL is pursuing the use of accelerator mass spectrometry as a technology that holds great promise for the sampling that is planned in these resettling communities.

If the opportunity should arise that your assistance might be needed, we will certainly get in touch. Thank you for keeping us up to date on your progress.

Sincerely,

R. Thomas Bell
Office of International
Health Programs

cc: William Robison, LLNL

